



# 2010 Emerging Business of the Year

## TLC Garden Center



Owner	Savannah Flory
Nature of Business	Garden Center, Landscape Design and Installation
City	LaHarpe
County	Allen
Phone	620-496-1234
Business Began	2000
Employees	7
KSBDC Consultant	Tom Byler

**Savannah's advice for anyone opening or purchasing a business is to seek assistance from the KSBDC in developing a solid business plan. Doing so "really forces you to look at all aspects of the business and what potential obstacles and challenges you may face and how you're going to handle them. I had no idea how to write a business plan, and Tom gave me all the tools and advice I needed to develop a very thorough plan."**

**— Savannah Flory, Owner**

*TLC celebrated their 10-year anniversary in 2010. Pictured are Levi Flory and Savannah (in center) along with several TLC staff members and ambassadors from the Iola Area Chamber of Commerce.*



**Pittsburg State University  
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Savannah Flory became interested in garden centers and greenhouses when she went to "take your daughter to work day" with her mother, Corinna Heard, in sixth grade. In 2000, her mother started her own business, TLC Greenhouse and Garden Center in LaHarpe, Kansas, where Savannah worked while going to school. This led her to pursue a degree in Horticulture, with an emphasis on Landscape Design with the intention of eventually returning home to help run the family garden center. When Corinna passed away in 2006, Savannah, along with her fiancé and employees, kept the business going while finishing college. Upon graduating college in May 2007, she returned home to run the business full-time. Late in 2009, she purchased the business from her father, John Heard, and changed the business name to TLC Garden Center.

It was while considering the purchase of the business in the summer of 2009 that she contacted KSBDC Counselor Tom Byler. Savannah admits that, although she had been managing the business for several years, she really had no idea of where to start in the process of purchasing the business. Tom helped her determine who she needed to talk to, gave her ideas on where to obtain loans, and supplied her with the data and instruction needed in developing a business plan to help secure a loan from their bank. As a result, she was able to obtain a loan in the amount needed for capital and the purchase of the business.

Nearing the end of her first year of owning the business, she describes the challenges she has faced so far as "works in progress" and is still making adjustments and changes as problems arise. She constantly looks for ways to improve the business and provide customers with the quality experience and customer service that they deserve.

Savannah believes that hard work is the key to success for her business. This often means working 70-80 hours a week during the busy spring season. She explains that perceptions are not always accurate. "Some people may think that owning your own business gets you out of putting hours in that once you get to that point you get to set your own hours and work whenever you want. But that's not the case. In fact, in order to succeed, it's quite the opposite." However, she admits that the best part about owning her own business is the personal satisfaction she gets out of seeing the parking lot full and customers leaving with a smile on their face. "I love our type of business, because people who are shopping for flowers are just happy people. It is not something they have to buy, like groceries or gas; they come here because they want to and they enjoy it."

### Secret to Success

**"I think that hard work is the key to success. You have to put the hours in to really know your business, research what other businesses in your field are doing to succeed, and never settle on being just average."**